

international relations caused by the February 24, 1996, destruction by the Cuban government of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba. In July 1996 and on subsequent occasions, the Cuban government stated its intent to forcefully defend its sovereignty against any U.S.-registered vessels or aircraft that might enter Cuban territorial waters or airspace while involved in a flotilla or peaceful protest. Since these events, the Cuban government has not demonstrated that it will refrain from the future use of reckless and excessive force against U.S. vessels or aircraft that may engage in memorial activities or peaceful protest north of Cuba. On February 26, 2004, by Proclamation 7757, the scope of the national emergency was expanded in order to deny monetary and material support to the repressive Cuban government, which had taken a series of steps to destabilize relations with the United States, including threatening to abrogate the Migration Accords with the United States and to close the United States Interests Section. Further, Cuba's most senior officials repeatedly asserted that the United States intended to invade Cuba, despite explicit denials from the U.S. Secretaries of State and Defense that such action is planned. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to Cuba and the emergency authority relating to the regulation of the anchorage and movement of vessels set out in Proclamation 6867 as amended and expanded by Proclamation 7757.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
February 26, 2007.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:49 a.m., February 27, 2007]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on February 28.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency Relating to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels**

*February 26, 2007*

*Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, which states that the emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, as amended and expanded on February 26, 2004, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2007.

Sincerely,

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate.

**Remarks at the Republican Governors Association Gala**

*February 26, 2007*

Thanks for coming. Thank you all for being here tonight. I am honored to join you. You might remember, I am a former member of the Republican Governors Association. And now I am a proud brother of another former member. Now he's out of office, I understand Jeb is spending a lot of time on Florida's beaches. [Laughter] He says people still recognize him; when he's out there in his Speedo, they come up and say, "How you doing, Governor Schwarzenegger?" [Laughter]

He made a promise to me that when he left office, he'd make sure that he had a good man following him, and he kept his promise when Charlie Crist got elected Governor of the great State of Florida.

And I also want to welcome some of the newly elected Governors: Governor Jim Gibbons of Nevada; Butch Otter of Idaho—he's out there getting a hors d'oeuvre—and Governor Sarah Palin of Alaska. And I thank my friends, the Governors, who have joined us. I really enjoyed our visit today. I appreciate the kindness you have shown to me, and I appreciate your hard work.

I particularly want to pay tribute to the spouses of the Governors, the people who work hard to make sure the Governors are capable of doing their jobs. And speaking about spouses, Sonny took it a little far when he said Laura was a courageous person—I think he was referring to the fact that she was courageous when she said yes when I asked her to marry me. But I'm real proud of Laura. I love her dearly. I think she's a great First Lady for the country and I—[*ap- plause*].

And I thank Sonny Perdue and Mary. I appreciate my friend Matt Blunt and Melanie. You know, this is a record-setting evening, and it took an extraordinary leader from a great State to convince you to contribute. And so I want to thank—say thanks to my friend and my Governor, Rick Perry and the first lady of Texas, Anita. I want to thank the members of my administration who have joined us today, and I appreciate you coming.

I think the thing that's important for you all to realize is that we are the party of ideas. We're results-oriented people. That's how we got the majority, and that's what it's going to take to get the majority back—standing on principle, not worrying about polls and focus groups, but saying what you think is right and acting on it.

In the battle of ideas, we stand with the American people. We believe in a strong national defense. We believe in less government and lower taxes. And we believe that you've got to trust the values and the good judgment of the American people.

And I appreciate the innovative ideas that Governors—Republican Governors are

pushing all around this country. And that's why, when I spoke to them today, I think I said, it's very important for this administration to work with our Governors. The States are laboratories for reform. The States are the place where some of the best innovation can take place to make sure the entire country benefits.

I've set a big agenda here in Washington, DC; I want to share some of that with you. But my political agenda is this: more Republican Governors, take back control of the House and the Senate, and make sure we keep the White House in 2008.

And I want to thank you all for helping make those goals become reality, and I appreciate you contributing of your hard-earned money. It means a lot to candidates who are running for office. It means a lot to the organizers, people like Sonny, who are going to recruit good people to run for office, to know that there's something besides the telephone call awaiting them; there's support. And you're making a big difference, and I appreciate it.

We've got a lot to do here in Washington. The most important job for the Federal Government is to protect the American people from harm. And the best way to do that is to stay on the offense against these terrorists, is to defeat them overseas so we don't have to face them again here in America.

And that's exactly what we're doing. Every single day, there are good and decent people in my administration and around the country who are securing this homeland. There are good, honorable people overseas chasing down these killers and bringing them to justice. Part of our strategy is to keep the pressure on them. The other part of our strategy is to defeat their hateful ideology by spreading freedom around the world. I believe that freedom is universal, and I believe it's in the interest of the United States to free people, so that the world will become a more peaceful place.

There are two major theaters in this global war against these extremists. One is Afghanistan, and the other is Iraq. I'd like to spend a little time on the subject of Iraq. As you know, I recently announced a plan for victory in Iraq. I was confronted with a serious decision to make: Did I accept the status quo

and hope that the capital of that young democracy would somehow be able to regain its footing; or did it make sense for the United States to gradually withdraw from that country, before democracy was able to take hold; or did it make sense to reinforce our troops then in the theater to make sure the capital city of Baghdad became secure? And I chose the latter because I think it gives us the best chance to achieve our objective, which is a democracy that can defend itself, sustain itself, and govern itself and serve as an ally in this war against these extremists.

I made some changes, nominated a good man to lead the cause there in Baghdad, General David Petraeus. He recently went up for confirmation in the United States Senate. He received a fair hearing and was approved unanimously by the Senators, and I appreciated them for their strong support. During his testimony, General Petraeus strongly supported the idea of sending reinforcements into Baghdad to help the capital city, to help this new Government find breathing space necessary to do the reconciliation necessary after years of tyranny. And yet, shortly after his unanimous confirmation, the House of Representatives passed a symbolic resolution that expressed disapproval of the very plan that he thought was necessary to accomplish our objective.

I have no problems with debate; as a matter of fact, one of the healthy things about our society is the right for people to express their opinion. I never question anybody's patriotism who disagrees with me. But soon the United States Congress will have to make a decision that will have real consequences, whether or not to fund the troops we have sent into harm's way. Our men and women in uniform risk their lives to carry out our plan to support this new democracy and to secure Baghdad. And wherever Members may stand on my decision, we have a solemn responsibility to give our troops the resources and the flexibility they need to prevail.

This is tough work, but it's necessary work. It's necessary to help this young Government survive, because, you see, if we were to leave Iraq before the job is done, the enemy would follow us here. Failure in Iraq would invite chaos, would embolden those who would do us harm again, would enable them to recruit

more of their fanatics that are willing to kill the innocent. Failure in the Iraq would cause the extremists to rejoice and those who hunger for a better way of life to wonder about the resolve of the United States of America. Failure in Iraq is unacceptable. It would affect generations of Americans to come. And that is why I made the decision I made, a decision that will help us secure the peace for our children and our grandchildren.

Our foreign policy is more than war and diplomacy. I believe to whom much is given, much is required. And we're a blessed nation. Therefore, it is in our national interests to defeat disease and hunger and poverty as best as we can. I will continue to call upon the United States Congress to fund the HIV/AIDS initiative on the continent of Africa, so we can save life. Do you realize as a result of your generosity and the support of the Congress, the PEPFAR initiative has now delivered antiretroviral drugs, lifesaving drugs, to more than 800,000 people in less than 5 years?

A robust foreign policy that reflects the heart of the American people is one that recognizes that we can eliminate malaria in countries around the world. And I thank Laura and others in this audience for leading the fight against malaria, and I call upon other free nations of the world to join the United States to do our duty, to save lives no matter where they may be. We will challenge corruption where we find it. We will insist for freedom where we can insist, in places like Cuba and Belarus and Burma. And we will always remember that this great Nation not only must take care of the unfortunate in our own land but help others realize the great blessings of freedom. I'm proud of our foreign policy, and for the next 2 years, I will conduct it with all the—with all my soul and with all my might, because I believe it is in the best interests of the United States of America.

Here at home the most important thing the Government can do is to create the conditions for the entrepreneurial spirit to flourish. Oh, I know they don't talk too much about it, but I am—and that's the economy. And it's cooking, and we intend to keep it that way. We believe government doesn't create wealth but the environment in which

small businesses can grow to be big businesses, an environment where people can realize their dreams. And the best way for the Federal Government to create that environment is to cut taxes and to keep them low, which is precisely what we did.

If the Congress wants to continue this economic vitality, the best gesture they can make is to make the tax cuts we passed permanent. Oh, I know you'll hear them say up here in Washington, "Well, you cannot balance the budget unless you raises the taxes on the American people." We're proving them wrong. I set the goal of cutting the deficit in half in a 5-year period of time, and we exceeded that goal by 3 years. You know why? Because when the economy is strong, it yields more tax revenues for the U.S. Treasury. And so when you combine that with fiscal austerity, we're on our way to balancing the budget. And I just submitted a budget to the United States Congress that says, we'll balance the budget in 5 years, so long as they keep taxes low to keep the economy going and they're wise about how we spend your money.

We've got a slight problem up here, what's called earmarks. And I intend to do something about it, and I intend to work with Congress to do something about it. An earmark is a special-interest item. It gets stuck into one of these appropriations bills. A lot of times they never even see the light of day. In other words, they don't debate them; they don't vote on them; they just show up on my desk. Those days have got to end if we're going to make sure we're wise about how we spend your money. You know what Congress needs to do? They need to give me the same power these—many of these Governors have, and that's the line-item veto.

I'm looking forward to working with both Republicans and Democrats on doing something about Social Security and Medicare. It's tough—it's tough political work up here to do that. A lot of people don't want to deal with that issue. My advice and my call is for people to bring their ideas to the table. Come to the table with how best to save a generation from high taxes or reduced benefits. You bring your ideas to the table, and so will I, and we'll see if we can't do something good for the American people, set aside politics

and solve the Social Security issue once and for all.

I'm looking to working with my friends, the Governors, on health care. I believe some of the most innovative ideas on health care are being proposed by our Governors. Michael Leavitt, who is head of HHS, is asking Congress to give affordable grants—in other words, the flexibility of that Federal money we're spending in the States so that these Governors can design programs all aimed at making sure our uninsured can afford private insurance. And I emphasize "private insurance." Some in Washington believe the best way to solve the health care issue is for the Federal Government to solve it. I don't believe that. I believe the best solution in health care is to empower consumers to make choices. The best way to do that at the State level is to have flexibility in Federal funding so they can design programs for basic health insurance, coupled with this reform: I believe that there ought to be a \$15,000 standard deduction—if you're married—off your income taxes and payroll taxes to help you afford insurance.

If you're working uninsured or if you're working for a small business who has no health insurance, you pay with after-tax dollars, and if you work for a corporation, you can get your insurance free, and that is unfair. The Tax Code needs to be reformed.

Congress needs to pass association health plans to let small businesses pool risk across jurisdictional boundaries so our small-business owners can better afford health insurance. We need to continue to promote health savings accounts. We need medical liability reform in Washington, DC, to keep good docs in the practice and keep the cost of medicine reasonable. We need information technology. In all I'm telling you, the best policy for health care is to make sure that it's doctors and patients making the decisions, not bureaucrats and insurance companies.

I'm looking forward to working with our Governors on No Child Left Behind. That bill comes up for reauthorization in Congress, and Congress needs to reauthorize it, and here's why. I believe strongly States ought to have flexibility. I believe strongly in local control of schools. But I believe in

setting high standards for children, and I believe it is important to measure to determine whether or not our children can read and write and add and subtract early. And if they can't, there ought to be special help. And when they do, we ought to thank our teachers and thank our Governors and thank the legislature for adequately funding education. But one thing we can't do is we can't leave children behind by just guessing whether or not they're learning. The best policies are to measure, and when we find schools that will not change, then we've got to give parents different choices so that no child is left behind in the United States of America.

We need an immigration policy that holds the values of the United States of America. We'll enforce our borders, but we need more than that. We need a temporary-worker program that will enable willing workers to do jobs Americans are not doing, so that we can get the pressure off the border and uphold the values of the United States of America.

I can keep going—[laughter]—but Laura is giving me the hook.

I do want to talk about one other subject, though, before I leave, and that is energy. This country—and that's going to sound odd for a Texan to say—this country is too dependent on oil, and we need to do something about it right now. You see, dependency on energy from foreign sources is a national security problem. Sometimes we get that oil from countries that don't like us. Dependency on oil is a economic problem. When a country like China demands more oil, relative supply, the price of crude oil goes up and so does the price of gasoline at the pump. Dependency on oil means we're not being good stewards of the environment. And therefore, we have spent \$12 billion thus far in my Presidency to promote new technologies to enable us to say, we're becoming less dependent on oil.

And I want to share with you a novel idea I threw out for the Congress and asked for their passing. I believe that we can reduce the gasoline we use by 20 percent over the next 10 years. And I believe we can do so by promoting hybrid batteries and ethanol. And so I laid out a mandatory fuel standard

of 35 billion gallons of alternative fuels by 2017. It is a bold initiative; it is a necessary initiative; and it's a practical initiative because of the technological advances this country is going to make.

We can only feed—we can only fuel our automobiles with so much ethanol from corn; after a while the hog growers begin to get nervous when that price of corn gets up. And so, therefore, we're spending a lot of your money, and so is the private sector, on developing ways to make ethanol out of wood chips or switch grass or agricultural refuse. The whole purpose is for this Congress to work with this administration to make the difficult decisions now to fund technologies that will enable us to say that we're less dependent on oil, we're better stewards of the environment, and we're conscious about our national security. And that day is coming.

Good policy drives good politics. And the best policy is based upon solid principles—principles like the marketplace, principles like low taxes, principles like trusting people to spend their money, principles like a strong national defense is necessary to protect generations that are coming, principles like the power of freedom to make the world a better place. I'm looking forward to working with the United States Congress on principled policy.

I've got to tell you, I'm really optimistic about our country. I believe our future is a bright future. And the reason I do is because I know the character and nature of our citizens. We're a decent land, a courageous land, and a compassionate land, and it is my honor to be the President of such a fine group of people.

Thanks for coming, and may God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:50 p.m. at the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger of California; Gov. Sonny Perdue of Georgia; Gov. Matt Blunt of Missouri; and Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq.

**Remarks Following a Meeting With  
President Elias Antonio Saca  
Gonzalez of El Salvador**

*February 27, 2007*

**President Bush.** *Puesta bienvenidos a mi amigo, el Presidente de nuestro amigo de El Salvador. Gracias.* Thanks for coming. We spent a lot of time talking together, because I value the advice of the President.

We talked about a lot of subjects. We talked about the fact that the first year of the trade agreement between the United States and El Salvador is coming up. And the President told me that a lot of people are benefiting—a lot of people in his country are benefiting from the opportunity presented by trade. And I told him that people in our country benefit from the relationship. Under his leadership, the economy of El Salvador is strong. And I congratulate you for your leadership.

We talked about interesting opportunities available. And one, of course, is biofuels. We both recognize that the development of biofuels is in our national interests. And I thank you for your vision.

We talked about the Millennium Challenge Account that the President has ably led. And it's going to enable people in the northern part of his country to realize the benefits of free trade and commercialism.

I expressed my concerns and our condolences about the three gentlemen who were recently assassinated, which led us into a broad discussion about security and my desire to help the President deal with security issues.

And finally, the President reminded me that TPS expires next September. Every time he comes to the Oval Office, he's expressed his deep concern and strong support for his citizens that may be here in our country. And I assured him that I was openminded to his request, but more importantly, I'm working hard to get a comprehensive bill, immigration bill passed out of the United States Congress.

And so once again, we had a substantial and meaningful conversation. And that's what you expect when you have two friends together. *Gracias, señor.*

**President Saca Gonzalez.** Thank you very much, Mr. President.

We have talked extensively with the President on varied—array of issues. And I spoke to President Bush about how meaningful his trip to Latin America is going to be, because this is going to give a signal that the United States is interested in Latin America.

**President Bush.** Thank you, sir.

**President Saca Gonzalez.** We have talked about free trade. On March 1st, the CAFTA agreement that is with El Salvador with the United States of America is going to be one year old. And during this year, we have increased in 20 percent all our exports. And our economy has doubled its size. So there's no doubt that free trade has allowed this to become true.

We have also talked about the Millennium Account, and the project to develop the northern part of El Salvador is going to be a complete success, and very soon, we're going to have the first disbursements made. And we wanted that to be—the project of the development of the northern part of our country to become a success story for the Millennium Account.

We also talked about the TPS with President Bush today. And the President always has a very positive answer for El Salvador. But more importantly, today is the comprehensive immigration reform. And we will have to wait and see what happens between the Executive and the Congress of the United States. We have more than 2 million Salvadorans living here in the United States. The majority are legal citizens; many are already North Americans. And the President has always been very sensitive to this issue of the Salvadorans here, for which I feel very grateful.

**President Bush.** Thank you.

**President Saca Gonzalez.** We talked about regional security and its importance, and also the combat to drug dealing and the combat to the gangs. And we have found many points of coincidence with the President.

And we also talked with the President about biofuels and the importance of biofuels, and how necessary it is, you know, to develop biofuels in the region so that we need less gas and less oil to have our cars